



ILCAAAP

Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

## Marijuana Alert - January 29, 2021



### **State moves forward with new POT licensing**

Tuesday's announcement that state agencies are moving forward with issuing the new deficiency notices signals that the drawn-out process of licensing new cannabis businesses is back on track - though Greene said officials haven't "confirmed" which licenses will be doled out first. Meanwhile, a pending lawsuit filed by the Illinois Craft Cannabis Association in Cook County court seeks to force the state to immediately release the delayed cultivation, infusion and transportation licenses.

Following the announcement of the initial qualifiers for the dispensary license lottery, KPMG came under fire from some applicants who claimed they were never sent the required deficiency notices. Around the same time, the Sun-Times also found that a KPMG employee partnered in one of the startups that initially qualified for the dispensary lottery.

**Despite those issues, the firm will remain involved in the process for the foreseeable future. [Read](#)**

### **Chicago Mayor rebuffs plan to allow Pot shops in heart of downtown**

"We're not turning Michigan Avenue into pot paradise," Lightfoot told the Sun-Times.

"My concern about the effect on the shopping and tourists jewel of our city really hasn't

changed one wit since the fall of 2019, when we first started wrestling with this issue."

Just six new pot shops have been licensed in the city in the wake of the legalization law,

five of which are in or around the downtown area. . . . Due to the opposition and the city's onerous zoning process, **pot firms under the gun to open their new stores before the end**

of March are now looking outside the city, according to Pam Althoff, a former state senator who now heads the influential Cannabis Business Association of Illinois.

**"It's a much faster, simpler and easier process in the suburban areas, where many suburban councils are welcoming of cannabis enterprise,"** Althoff said. [Read](#)

## **Zion approves child care center, then backtracks because it's too close to proposed marijuana cultivation center**

The city of Zion has for years championed efforts to relocate a lucrative marijuana growing license from the company already using it in Aurora to a rival looking to set up shop in town, a dispute that has hinged on the location of the Aurora business.

Owner Krystle McNeely said the ability to move her care center into the Zion building would allow it to serve additional students and provide more programming, such as a gym and a library. She said she went through the proper process to receive permits and the suspension of the permit amounts to the city of Zion putting its preferred business over a local company ready to open. **"My concern is that they will put an elusory cannabis grow deal before a local business that can also help produce revenue,"** she said. [Read](#)

## **Challenges remain in Marijuana Licensing**

That suit was later dropped when Gov. J.B. Pritzker announced unsuccessful applicants would be able to revise their applications. But Hatchett, whose group invested nearly \$1 million in applications, isn't optimistic. "Do I think this chance to correct your deficiencies is going to change anything? Absolutely not," he said.

It's a feeling Hatchett says is common among other social equity applicants he's spoken with since. "There's almost a sense of everybody just throwing their hands up and saying, 'Typical. We know how corrupt Illinois is,'" he said. "When I didn't get a license, so many of my friends said, 'What do you expect? The fix was already in.'" [Read](#)

**Related - Equity Challenges - [Watch video](#) of governor's marijuana advisor**

## **Cannabis taxes fund state grants to groups helping poor communities**

The grants, which go to 81 community organizations, result from the law legalizing adult-use marijuana in Illinois. It requires **25% of pot tax revenues** help communities **suffering from economic disinvestment, violence, and the multilayered harm of disparate weed enforcement.** [Read](#)

### *For Immediate Action*

1. **Local officials are looking at marijuana businesses to generate revenue.** Contact your local officials to tell them of your concerns and ask them to OPPOSE marijuana businesses.
2. **Marijuana referenda will be on the April ballot** in [Roselle](#), [Decatur](#), and [Lincolnshire](#). Contact [ILCAAAP](#) for information about opposing and educating residents about the harm.
3. **Share this Alert** with your faith community and ask them to PRAY.
4. **Forward to 10 others.**

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